

LEWISTON MORNING TRIBUNE

'Whirlwind' greets new director of Clarkston college; Janey Danley has had busy first week at Walla Walla Community College

By KERRI SANDAINE of the Tribune

Janet Danley's first week at the Clarkston center of Walla Walla Community College could be called a crash course.

On her desk is a tablet filled with notes she jotted down during her first two days as director, the phone is ringing, and she's got a meeting to attend in Walla Walla in a few hours.

"It's kind of been a whirlwind, but it's fun," Danley said Wednesday morning, as she settled into her office and talked about her new role of overseeing a college that serves 1,500 full- and part-time students.

"I am so excited. I think there are so many opportunities for Walla Walla Community College and Asotin County. I think we are poised to serve the community in ways we couldn't in the past."

As director, Danley, 53, is in charge of personnel, budgets, scheduling courses, recruiting and evaluating part-time faculty, safety and security, and buildings.

"I get to do a little bit of everything. Basically, I'm responsible for the operations of the center."

She replaced Devon Gustafson, the former director who is now on the WWCC faculty, teaching social sciences and government classes. "He elected to go back to teaching," Danley said. "That is where his heart is."

One of the projects that will be getting a lot of Danley's attention in the coming months is construction of a nursing and health sciences building. The project was awarded \$1 million out of the state's capital budget during the past Legislative session, and architects are working on designs.

The new building, expected to cost between \$5 million and \$6 million, will give the college additional classroom and laboratory space, which is desperately needed, Danley said. "We can't project a timeline yet, but we hope to be in it as soon as possible."

Nursing and other health care related programs offered at the college are a popular draw among students, and the demand is growing, Danley said.

"We are really focused on providing a trained and educated work force for our community."

The new director also praised the faculty at the Clarkston center for their dedication and hard work. "They're amazing folks," she said. "The staff are here at students' and prospective students' beck and call. We are here to answer questions."

Danley, who is single, has worked in higher education for nearly 20 years and has two grown children. Her son, Bryan, resides in Havre, Mont., and daughter Sarah lives in Lewiston.

A native of Albuquerque, N.M., Danley got her undergraduate degree in Las Cruces, N.M. "I was 40 miles from the Mexican border, and I moved 40 miles from the Canadian border."

After living in Havre, Mont. for 17 years, she moved to Little Rock where she earned a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership at the University of Arkansas.

"That's one thing you learn from seeing other parts of the country. You find out where you belong and my heart is in the Northwest."

A resident of the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley for 10 years, Danley worked as a registrar and director of institutional research at Lewis-Clark State College, and was in charge of internal operations in admissions at Washington State University, prior to taking the WWCC job.

Danley plans to form partnerships with neighboring colleges and utilize her contacts at WSU, LCSC and the University of Idaho to expand transfer programs at the Clarkston center. "I plan to build on the good work Devon has done and cement those relationships," she said.

The summer session at the Clarkston center begins Monday.